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Temperature Rise

Over the past several years I have had the opportunity of being involved with the application of both insulated and non-insulated fire-rated steel access doors. I find it alarming that local and national code officials, architects, builders and dealers are confused over the proper use of insulated and non-insulated fire-rated steel access doors.

It is important to note that steel access doors come in three varieties of fire rating and fire-stopping capabilities:

UNARMED —Used when fire integrity between areas of a building is not a design criterion.

FIRE-RESISTANT — Doors in this classification are neither tested nor labeled by a third party. However, the construction inherent in the design is similar to fire-rated doors.

FIRE RATED — These doors are specified for use in wall openings when the passage of fire must be retarded. They are made using either Underwriters Laboratory (UL) or Warnock Hersey approved plans and materials. They carry a third party label showing the fire rating as follows:

Class A — Openings in fire walls and in walls that divided a single building into fire areas.

Class B — (1-hour and 1 1/2-hour ratings) Openings in enclosures of vertical communications through building and in 2-hour rated partitions providing horizontal fire separations.

Class C, D, E — Less critical fire rating applications.